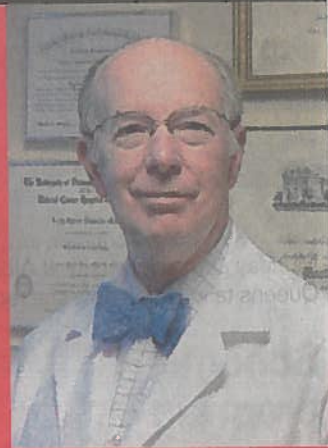


## MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS - CURRENT VICTORIES AND UNMET NEEDS

By Dr. Keith Edwards



Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is the second most common cause of disability in young adults, second to trauma. In the last 22 years, great advances in treatment for prevention of disability have been made due to research in medications and also in understanding of the importance of nutrition, the role of exercise, and avoiding infection and smoking.

The goal of treatment of MS is threefold: 1. Prevention of attacks called exacerbations, 2. Prevention of disability, 3. Prevention of new MRI lesions. When all 3 of these goals are achieved, the term 'No Evidence of Disease Activity' or NEDA can be applied. With early diagnosis and early treatment, NEDA is being achieved in more and more relapsing MS patients.

What about MS patients with 'progressive disease' or those who already have disability? Finally, good news and hope. In a trial of ocrelizumab, called ORATORIO, in MS patients with primary progressive MS, significant reduction of disability was achieved. Ocrelizumab was also shown to be effective in relapsing MS. Ocrelizumab effects a sub-type of lymphocytes (white blood cells) called 'B-cells' which is distinct from the other MS treatments which effect 'T-cells.' So the way in which ocrelizumab works is unique and may explain the benefit. Ocrelizumab may be available in two years if FDA approved. Other treatments that have been available for several years, from pills to intravenous treatments, are being used with better selection of patients and at earlier stages of MS to better lessen and stop disability.

Nerve recovery, or neuroregeneration, treatments are currently in research trials in humans. These are designed to assist the body to allow recovery of injured myelin. Anti-LINGO-antibody is in research trials in MS patients at this time.

MS is no longer a diagnosis of disability, at least not for the majority of MS patients. Credit goes to researchers, doctors who understand and treat the disease, and mostly to the patients and families who fight this disease or even the fear of disability so that soon, the disability associated with MS may be gone.

Keith Edwards, MD, FAAN  
Director, MS Center of Northeastern New York, Latham, NY  
Affiliated Staff, Neurology, Ellis Hospital, Schenectady, NY  
Assistant Clinical Professor of Neurology, Harvard Medical School  
Consulting Neurologist, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, MA



... continues to be an advocate for the disabled community. Mitte will share his story of perseverance - from growing up in Louisiana with his disability, to becoming a television star. His story is sure to educate and inspire.



Photo by Joan Heffler.  
Emcee, Benita Zahn of NewsChannel 13 and WAMS Chairperson, Christine Sisto Mertes of Capital Affairs, pose alongside paralympian Mallory Weggemann and her agent.



Photo by Joan Heffler.  
More than 300 guests attend the WAMS event annually, honoring a commitment to end the devastating effects of MS through funding and advocacy.



Photo by Joan Heffler.  
Enjoy chocolate treats and mimosas during the Meet and Greet from 11:30 am - 12:30 pm.



Photo by Joan Heffler.  
The Silent Purse Auction and amazing raffles are always a huge hit at the WAMS event! From COACH to Kate Spade...bid knowing your money supports

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